

FIAT *Happenings*



Dear Friends,

While on every occasion our wish is that you and your families are safe and well, at this time in our history of the COVID – 19 pandemic our desire for you and your loved one's well-being is even greater. The many uncertainties of our present-day challenges leave us not knowing what lies in front of us. Lynette and I, and all of us who are related to Project FIAT, share in your overwhelming stress, fear, and pain and want you to know that we are closer to you than ever before. We offer you our strength and support at this time.

Our friends in El Salvador have been greatly missing the beautiful relationships they have with our volunteers. As we wait to see how the current situation develops, we hold the people of El Salvador in our hearts and prayers as we look forward to the time we can be with them again.

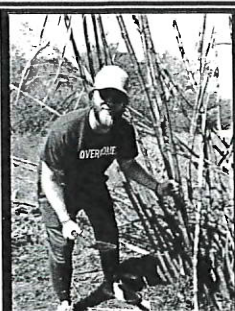
From the beginning of the pandemic, the government mandate ordered non-essential workers not to leave their homes and for all public transportation to shut down until further notice. Project FIAT made the heartfelt decision to offer our volunteer house employees their full salary, even though they were not working. In August, they were able to return to their responsibilities; and to keep them safe and healthy, the volunteer house van transports our workers to and from their homes. They are our family and indispensable in the upkeep of the volunteer house.

During this COVID calamity Project FIAT has continued to support the programs benefiting the people such as the lunch program which was forced to suspend hot cooked meals due to the COVID government mandate. This triggered a crisis of many families unable to purchase food. We arranged for many people to receive bags of food every 15 days. Thanks to fundraisers by our donors, we expanded the number of lunch program participants from 70 to 95. We desire to continue supporting these people in need beyond December and through the crucial months that lie ahead.

If we always know with certainty that God loves us, then today we need to live more deeply His presence that abides in us. Let us be brave! Let us leave an open space for him to flood us with His peace, to calm our fears and our anxieties, so that he may be God with us, God in us!

We remember you and your loved ones in our prayers.

Sister Belen Escauriaza, acj



Dr. Karla Aguilar Doctor In General Medicine

The Covid-19 pandemic forced the temporary closure of the medical clinic in Las Delicias. With the people quarantined, Karla realized that she could provide the medical help that the village needed. Funded by Project FIAT, she purchased the necessary supplies and began seeing patients in the building next to the daycare built by FIAT volunteers. Karla made up posters informing the village of her grand opening. Since the opening, Karla has secured a full-time job in a private clinic in Quetzaltepeque working Monday thru Saturday. She continues to see patients on Sundays in Las Delicias.

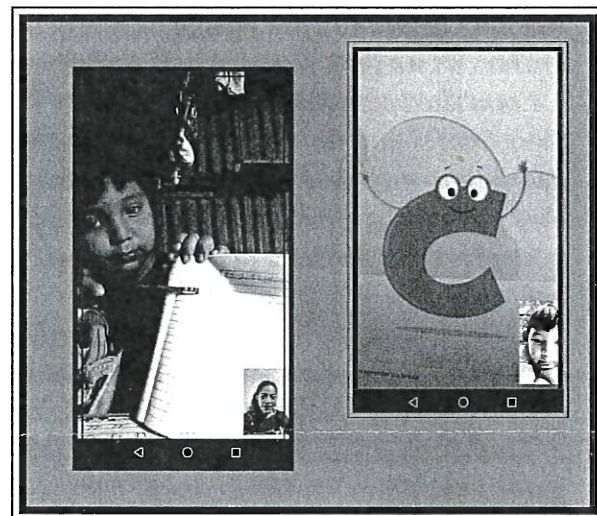
Hiromi Elizabeth Acosta Alfaro

Bachelor's Degree in Special Education

It is difficult to find a job after graduation but even more challenging during the Covid-19 pandemic. Hiromi is known for her love and patience with children. She obtained a job working with two different children in their homes. One child is underdeveloped in her language skills, and the other child is a young autistic boy. Her ultimate dream is to specialize in working with blind children, and she continues to learn Braille in her free time.

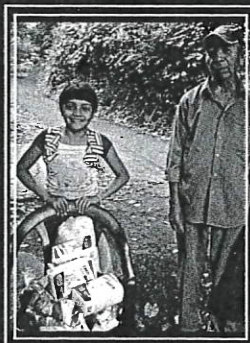
Tutoring Program

The Ministry of Education in El Salvador offered teaching via television and social media to all students countrywide. Learning guides were also available for children to photocopy each week. Project FIAT donated the weekly learning guides to those students who had little or no access to social media. With the Covid restrictions in place, cell phones were the only available means for our tutors to reinforce the lessons given by the Ministry of Education. It was not an ideal situation. Sadly, many students were unable to take advantage of our tutoring program; and as they became more frustrated, they dropped out of school.



Lunch Program

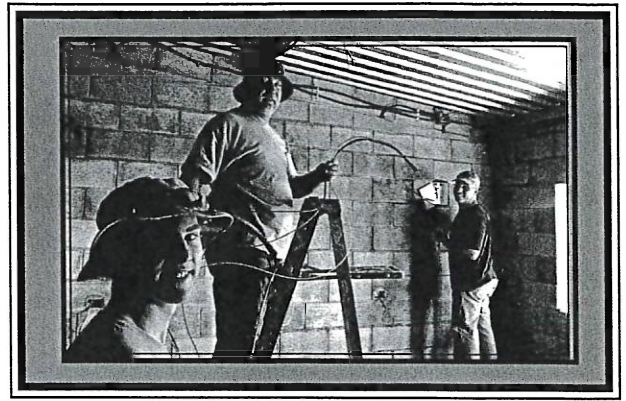
Before the pandemic changed our world, The lunch program supported 70 undernourished people in Las Delicias with one hot meal a day. Thanks to our donors' response to the Covid tragedy, we have been able to expand those numbers to include 95 men, women and children. Every 15 days bags of rice, beans, sugar and cornmeal are made up for the people to take to their homes. We hope to be able to continue this support into the new year.



And Let There Be Light

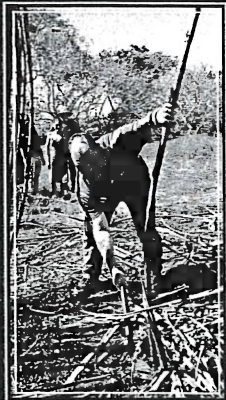
In just one short week we were fortunate to have several volunteers who were electricians join us from St. Cletus, MO. They worked under the guidance of a Salvadoran electrician. Together they installed the electrical conduits, wiring, grounding rod, and outlets in most of the homes being built for single mothers.

The volunteers also began constructing the road into the development by laying large pavers. These pavers will help slow down the water run off from the mountain in Las Delicias and protect the nearby homes from possible flooding.



Fun Fun Fun!!

In January 2020, Our Lady of Good Counsel High School organized a fun event for the people and children of Las Delicias. They rented a moon bounce and a big air slide, along with coordinating games and prizes for the children. Project FIAT's lunch program provided pizza and pupusas, and Our Lady of Good Counsel provided free drinks, french fries, hot dogs, popcorn, and fried yucca. It was a wonderful way to start off the school year and share with the people in Las Delicias.



New Experiences

Part of the experience of the Project FIAT volunteers is to learn from the people and to learn their ways first-hand. On several occasions we have had the opportunity to cut sugar cane alongside the workers, help to harvest the yucca root and even pick coffee beans. These experiences teach our volunteers the reality of the Salvadoran people as they work to support their families. They battle the harsh conditions of scorching heat and insects for \$7 a day.

Orphanage in Zacatecoluca, El Salvador

We have developed a wonderful partnership with the new Orphanage. In January, Father Ramon asked the volunteers if they could help fill some of the Christmas dreams of the children and purchase several bicycles. The volunteers didn't hesitate to answer the wishes of the children. We delivered 6 bicycles for boys and girls and had a wonderful celebration filled with games and pizza.

During the Covid pandemic Father Jose Fredis reached out for our financial assistance and Project FIAT donated \$1000 towards food, clothing and cleaning supplies.



